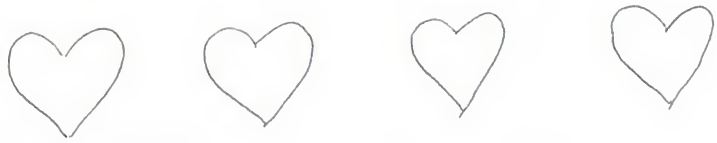


HEART

WUP



Hey friends!

Thanks for picking up a
copy of Heart Pulp #2!
This issue is not much like issue
#1, but I hope ya dig it!

In here, you'll find things about:

- love & heartache/healing
- my experiences with my
eating disorder
- talk about body acceptance
- and abusive/manipulative
relationships

On! And, as usual, me being
generally pumped about life.

Thanks for
reading!

♥MACK xoxo

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BOOM!



Things I've been up to lately:

- Winning 2nd place at Playoffs with the Ohio Roller
Girls, earning us a spot at Champs in November.
- Spending a lot of time outside.
- Spending way more time than usual being social and
hanging out with new friends and going to shows.
- Following my meal plan.
- Learning to play the bass in a cover band with 2 of my very good
friends AND writing our own music!
- Practicing self-love and trying to be better at active listening and
supporting people I care about.
- Coming out to my extended family about my trans* identity!

And!

- The LOD'ween Cover show! (Josie + The Pussycats!)
- LOD Halloween Party
- Playin' music
- Make Waves Fest (11)

Things I'm looking forward to:

- Champs!!!
- legal name change!
- playin' more music!



I wanna talk about love.

Because I've been feeling a lot of it lately. Romantic, platonic, overwhelming, disappointing, unconditional.... the kind that fills you up until you don't think you can take it anymore.

I want to talk about love to heal and move forward and to process the ways that it moves in my own life.

I recently got out of a nine month long partnership with someone that invoked feelings in me that I've never felt before. And I have been thinking about how that seems to have always been the case for me romantically. Each love is new and different and the types of love that are experienced are all important and wonderful and filling in their own ways.

But also how love evolves as we learn and grow as people.

How I'm not sure that I'm ready to love like I loved him. But how I'm not even sure if I ever will be able to again. Because I could never love anyone just the way that I loved him.

Like how I'll never love anyone like I loved my boyfriend in the 6th grade. Sweaty hands and hot leather bus seats. Sharing rides home and notes tucked safely in the cubby in his desk. Romantic and sentimental notions, in the context of my limited scope of experience and the movie Grease and Bee Gees songs.

Or how I'll never love anyone like I loved my best friend in the 8th grade. Mixtapes about needing me and being there for me. Lunches spent giggling in the counselors office, and inside joke after inside joke. "Everything is ok". Lying on the floor of my bedroom, crying to my mother that I think I'm in love with her. The devastation of losing her to a boyfriend in high school.

Or how I'll never love anyone like I loved my boyfriend in the 12th grade. Hours spent on basement steps, watching band practice. Hearing for the first time ever that someone wanted to marry me, thinking that I wanted that, too. Rose petals and candles and "my first time". Putting up with racism and sexism and homophobia and excusing it blindly. Thinking it was going to be forever, moving into adulthood, trying to navigate distance when I moved two hours away. Realizing that there was more out there for me.

Or how I'll never love anyone like my boyfriend in college. Love for all of the wrong reasons. How he made me feel instead of who he was. Based on internalized sexism and ideas of who I was or wasn't and who I should be. Trying my hardest not to take up space and be what I thought everyone else, mostly him, wanted me to be. Not saying yes, and letting it happen anyways, and blaming myself and loving him despite it. Thinking there was something wrong with me and I was lucky that he loved me and wanted to be with me.

Or how I'll never love anyone the way that I loved my girlfriend the summer before my senior year or college. Best friends turned into butterflies. Road trips and secret kisses and dreaming of adventure. Building blanket forts and sharing passion and encouragement and healing and growing. Post cards with love notes and more "first times". Fucking everything up, despite how much I loved her.

And no - I don't believe I'll ever love anyone the way I loved my partner. Fostered ways to grow and change. Creating a safe environment to explore my own polyamory and sexuality. Opened doorways of opportunity and giving me space to grow. Offering me constructive criticism and new ways to look at the world. Understanding. Bike rides and dog walks. Pushing comfort zones. Excusing shitty behavior because I was learning about myself and about how I want relationships to operate in my life.

But I'll also never love anyone like I love my family and my best friends. Unconditionally and wholly and despite all of the reasons they annoy me. Because they are good for my heart. And I want to be good for theirs. I love them as "my heart is so full and I'm so thankful".

And I'll never love anything like I love the way it feels to play roller derby with my team, or ride my bike in the morning when everything is still quiet, or play bass and sing as loud as I fucking can, or sing along with my favorite bands and my friends at a show. The "I don't ever want to not do that because it's the best thing ever" love. That fills me up in a different way than any other type of love.

But I don't think I want to love everything the same way. I want to experience all of the different kinds of love that I can, and let my loves change and grow as I do. I want them to be better with time, and they often are. I want room for criticism in my love.

I know there are some ways that I don't ever want to love again. And I also know that there may be other ways that I have yet to experience. And I want to learn to let all of these different kinds of love fill me and be enough for me.

♥ Healing during heartache:

- Be angry. Be sad. Feel what ya need to feel. It's ok!
- Find some ways to fill your heart up and to love. Surround yourself with them.
- Talk about it! No one wants to be "that person" talking about their breakup or whatever. But guess what! Fuck that! It's important to process things how you need to. Use yr support system & talk if you want and need to.
- Self-love! Take yrself on a date! Spend an evening (or however long!) on yr stuff! Do what you need and be kind to your self!

What are some ways that you
care for yourself?

♡ _____ ♡

♡ _____ ♡

♡ _____ ♡

♡ _____ ♡

When was the last time you were
sad? How did you handle it?

♡ _____ ♡

♡ _____ ♡

♡ _____ ♡

♡ _____ ♡



Trigger Warning eating disorder, self abuse,
food + weight talk.

I wake up to a swift kick in the gut.

deep breath *Fuck. It's gonna be another one of those days.*

You whisper in my ear, "You did it again. Nice fucking job. You worthless piece of shit."

I swing my feet over the side of the bed and stand slowly. Make my way towards the bathroom, where I know you'll be waiting. I don't look down at my legs. They are tired, but I'd rather not look to see how much they've swelled up.

Don't look. Don't look into the mirror.

I look down at the drain in the sink and I reach for my toothbrush.

"You're teeth are rotting out. You don't take good care of them. What are you going to do when they all fall out?"

sigh *I don't know. I'm doing the best I fucking can, ok?*

Reluctantly, I look into the mirror. Only at my face and neck, though. You're standing behind me scrutinizing every body part, making sure that I'm aware of all of the ways that each one of them are unacceptable, embarrassing, disgusting. Not good enough.

"Look at how fat you are. Look at how fucking big you've gotten. You piece of shit. You don't deserve to leave the house today. Everyone will look at you and think you are gross. Curl up in a fucking ball and die."

closes eyes I want to die. How am I going to get through today? Just get through today. Please just be quiet. Please just leave me alone.

I head back to my room to get dressed. You only let me wear a few different things. So, rather than start a fight or upset you, I pick out one of the 3 black shirts that I wear. One of the ones I didn't wear yesterday. And the same pair of black shorts I've been wearing all week. These are safe.

Please be quiet. Please be quiet. Please be quiet. It's fine. It's ok. Just get dressed. Start thinking about what you have to do today.

You stand quietly (thank fucking God), but scrutinize me as I strip down to my skin to get dressed for the day. I don't look in the mirror. I focus on a spot on the floor. I count the number of toes on my feet. I don't think my clothes feel any tighter, but I can't really tell.

"You wear the same fucking thing every day. People notice. They think you're fucking weird. What's wrong with you?"

I don't know. I'm just wearing what's ok to wear. You told me I could wear this. What am I supposed to do?

You send me out the door for work without breakfast. "You fucked up. You aren't allowed to eat breakfast. Maybe I'll let you have something later. You don't need it right now anyways. You're running late. Just go."

I search for a song on my ipod that doesn't make me want to kill myself. I listen to that on the bike ride to work.

At work, all morning, people are saying things to me, but it's like they're on the other side of a glass wall and I can only faintly hear them and I don't remember a lot of it. Everything you told me, all the things you always tell me, are bouncing around inside my skull and sitting heavy in my gut.

It's hard to be seen by people right now. It's always hard to be seen by people. You keep checking in on me. Reminding me that I'm not good enough. That my body isn't acceptable. That I'm disgusting and ugly and no one will love me. I keep looking over my body. Trying to figure out if what you tell me is true. I can't ever fucking tell what size I am. I can't ever fucking tell what I look like. If it's ok or not.

I'm hungry. I'm so fucking hungry. I want to eat everything. I want to consume. I feel it tugging at the back of my head, at my hands. But I don't want anything. I don't want to need anything. I don't deserve anything. I can't keep my thoughts straight. I can't tell which are mine and which are the ones that have been seared into my brain by your repetition. My head feels too full.

Work ends. I don't want to be alone but I need to not be around anyone. I don't deserve to be around anyone. I need to hide.

"How was work? You're hungry. Go get something from the kitchen."

You follow me into the kitchen. I know you're saying that to fuck with me. You're rarely kind to me. If I eat something, you'll make me eat everything. I know I don't want to do that. If I don't eat something, you'll be happy, but I will still be hungry and probably weak. And you'll probably make me eat something I don't want to eat later. We're at a stalemate. I sit at the kitchen table and stare at the floor.

Sigh Fuck.

This goes on for about an hour. You're yelling contradictions at me. I'm immobilized by anxiety and shame and sheer terror.

I give up and go to the gym. Sometimes, movement is the only thing that helps me feel ok in my body. Sometimes, it's the only thing that helps me forget about all the bullshit you tell me. But, even then, sometimes you remind me that I don't do enough. That I don't look like everyone else in the gym. You tell me that people stare at me and think I'm stupid. That I need to do more. More. More. In order to salvage any amount of worth and value that I have as a person. There's no fucking escape.

Just leave me the fuck alone for, like, 2 seconds. 2 fucking seconds. Please.

I come home and reluctantly take off my clothes. I shower, but I don't look in the mirror. But I don't look at my body either. I'm afraid of what that will mean for me. I'm afraid. I'm afraid of everything. I close my eyes and scrub and I try not to think about anything.

Just let me get through the night. Please let me get through the night.

It's not like this as much anymore. It's like there's a quiet emptiness where you used to be, sometimes, and I'm moving forward and learning how to fill it with pieces of my life that are kind and loving and gentle. Fill it with pieces of myself that I didn't know existed, until you stopped taking up the space that they needed to bloom. But I have to fight for every inch.

I'd like to be able to believe that you're gone for good. That you're somewhere far away and I don't have to worry about when I'll see you again. But I know that there will still be mornings that I wake up and you're kneeling next to my bed, looking me straight in the face, waiting for me to acknowledge you and play by your rules and let you run the show. There will still be moments when I'll turn a corner, look in a mirror, hear something familiar, and there you'll be.

But I'm not afraid of you or what you have to say about how I look or how I spend my time or how I chose to love myself.

I cooked myself dinner last week. I stand in front of the mirror. I have two new outfits. And I'm not afraid.

Trigger warning: manipulation/coercion,
emotional abuse

Pervasive Abuse in Relationships

I've been in manipulative and hurtful relationships for a long time.

I have always gotten myself out of these relationships when things didn't feel right. Or because I knew that I deserved better than how I was being treated. Or because I realized that I couldn't or didn't want to deal with that person. When you get to a point in your relationships when you feel like you can't ever criticize the other person or you can't ask for the support that you need because it's futile and they won't listen anyways and it will just result in a fight, it's not much of a relationship anymore, anyhow. I've been smart enough to always know to get out.

Here's the thing, though; I never knew, at the time, that these relationships were abusive.

I certainly didn't name them as such. And I didn't blame my partners. I either blamed myself or I took it as a learning experience from an unhealthy relationship and moved forward.

The abusive relationships are a problem, yes. But it's also a problem that I didn't even know it. That the abuse, coercion, manipulation, and poor consent were so pervasive that the way that I was socialized taught me that these things were either my own fault or just the way that relationships are.

I constantly romanticized the shitty behavior of my partners and took on the role of the heartbroken lover of these people that "just didn't know any better" or who "needed me". I made it my responsibility to suffer their bullshit in hopes that their love for me would change them. That's a lie that movies and popular music taught me to believe. Romanticizing of manipulation, coercion, and emotional turmoil, happened constantly in the movies, T.V. shows, and the popular music that I was surrounded by as a young person. I didn't know that the hurtful behaviors of my previous partners were a direct result of learned sexism, victim blaming, misogyny, and toxic ideas about what healthy relationships look like.

Why are we taught that physical harm is abuse but not taught about oppression and power dynamics in our relationships? Why does no one teach us about how those things can become abusive? Or that coercion or manipulation in any form is wrong? Why doesn't anyone tell us that sex is always optional and that if our partners can't respect that, it's not ok?

I'm not mad at myself. And I'm not mad at the people that raised me. I'm mad at the systems that are in place that perpetuate these shitty ideas of how relationships should operate. And I'm mad that those things still happen, even in our safe(r) little bubbles in our radical communities. And I'm mad that I don't know how to keep these things from happening or how to teach people the more subtle ways that abuse can happen. I'm mad that people still think that it's a matter of being "overly sensitive" and not a matter of learned behavior to do mean, coercive, or manipulative things.

It's easy to forget that just because someone is nice to me, doesn't mean they are a nice person or, at the very least, nice to other people. And that just because someone says they are sorry every time I call them out on something hurtful, doesn't mean that they are actively trying to change those hurtful words or behaviors. It doesn't mean that they are trying to be accountable. It used to be easy for me to forget that my ex boyfriend, saying homophobic remarks, racist slurs, and sexist jokes was harmful to me, despite not being directed at me. Harmful because of the power that they give him and because of their oppressive nature. It was easy to forget that I am allowed to criticize the people I care about when they are being manipulative, coercive, abusive, oppressive. And that they should respond appropriately to that criticism and work to change their behaviors.

Well, it's continually getting easier for me to remember and to recognize these things now. Not just in other people's relationships, but in my own. And I don't have time for your bullshit anymore.

I'm sitting here thinking about all of the things I want to say.

It's like there's too much stuck up in between my ears and stuffed into my chest. Like I can't untangle it enough to write about one thing at a time, 'cause as soon as I try to I get lost somewhere between my heart and my head and having to go to work or pay my bills.

I want to sound sincere. Because I am. But I also want to be able to reach people in a way that makes them feel something, inspires them to do something good or important for them, helps them to heal and move forward. And I don't want to sound like an idiot.

I want to tell everyone I know how much I fucking love them. How much their love and support means to me. How I wouldn't be here right now if it wasn't for them. How I might not have survived. How I never want to fucking take you or this community for granted. Because it's really special.

And I want to tell my friends how brave they are. How much I appreciate them and how much I appreciate when they share their stories and truths with me. How I know that life is fucking hard and they are doing such a good job just living and getting through the day. And how much I admire them and believe in their strength.

I want to talk to people about community. About what it means to be a part of something moving and breathing, intentional and meaningful. How we can work together to learn about power and privilege and what it means to create a safe® space. Not one that is built on the negation of negative terms, but one that is built on the fostering of positive relationships and reciprocation. Active listening. Accessibility. Accountability. Shared experience and shared liberation. On listening and offering grace and forgiveness, but also respecting boundaries and recognizing the need for self care.

I want to talk about healing. About how I can't do it without community and how I don't think anyone else should have to either. How we can all heal and help one another heal when we change our idea about what it means to support someone. About how we can help one another to heal and move forward in a world that makes it so fucking hard to do that. In a world that oppresses and cages and hurts and tells us there's only one good way to live our lives, but expects us to also do amazing things (disclaimer; within the limits that it dictates). When everything's a contradiction and it wants us and our bodies and our experiences to be exploited or oppressed or erased. I want to talk about creating spaces with my friends and the people that I love, where we can heal and recover and find reprieve from all of that shit that builds up.

I want to talk about this stuff..... But I don't just want to write about it. I want to share my ideas with you in dialogue and I want to hear what yours are, too. So let's talk about it.

***TRIGGER WARNING: Eating disorder, body image, gender dysphoria, body dysphoria

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For as long as I can remember, I've never wanted to take up space. The only memories of blissful times in which my space was very much my own and I was incredibly proud and boisterous about it, are the ones that I have via home movies of my young childhood when I would run around the house in nothing but my underwear and stick my nipple into the camera lens and make my dad film me dancing to the Foot Loose Soundtrack. But I don't actually remember what that feels like. I only remember what it feels like to feel all wrong. Undeserving. Ill-fitting. Too much. Way too much. Not my own.

My mom bought me Your Body, Your Self when I was maybe 10 years old. I remember she bought it for me because I started talking about how badly I wanted to shave my legs. All of my friends had started doing it. They all had bras, too. I also wanted one of those.

I remember thinking that maybe, if I got boobs and had my period, all of a sudden, I would fit somewhere. When I hit puberty, everything would just start to fall into place. I would blossom into the beautiful woman that I was supposed to be, like all of my friends were starting to do.

Well... puberty happened. And there was no magical transformation. I didn't wake up one morning and feel like I fit, finally. If anything, my skin felt more and more like it wasn't mine. Like what I was turning into was all wrong. Something always felt like it didn't fit. I always felt like I didn't fit.

As far back as I can remember, there's always been "something wrong" with me physically. I can't remember a time when there wasn't something I hated about myself or something I wish I had or didn't have. I don't know at all what it's like to not always be thinking about that. To not always have that be the central focus of everything that I do.

When you internalize all of the shit that the media and your peers throw at you about what's right and what's wrong regarding gender and your roll as whatever gender your supposed to be and what the expectations are from everyone ELSE for YOUR body, how can you not have a totally fucked up sense of who you are and who you want to be?

I've been reflecting a lot lately on how my eating disorder manifested itself in my life when I was younger. And then throughout my teenage and young adult years. About how and why my recently

recognized gender and body dysphoria played a roll in all of that for me, whether consciously or subconsciously.

It seems like somewhere in the midst of puberty and middle school crushes and reading 17 magazine and wanting to be someone that people liked and that could relate to others, everything got all jumbled up and no one was able to tell me that it was ok for me to let the different parts of myself manifest themselves in whatever ways I wanted them to. No one was able to let me know that my attraction to various genders and gender presentations was acceptable. And no one was able to tell me that my own gender and gender presentation didn't have to be aligned with how I was assigned and socialized or have anything to do with who I was attracted to. No one was able to tell me that my "female" body didn't have to be dressed "like a female body". And no one was able to help me sort through how confusing it is to have sexual attraction that is often different from my romantic attraction which is also different than my gender identity. So I tried to hard for so many years to fit into the boxes that I thought people wanted me to, or that I was supposed to.

I wasn't able to realize that part of the reason I was starving myself was to keep my body from looking like a body that felt all wrong. And losing weight until near death didn't make it any easier for me to relate to anyone. I wasn't able to realize that my struggle with coming to terms with all of these diverse and complex parts of myself manifested itself as an eating disorder in which I could feel in control of at least some aspect of my life.

I guess it's still a lot to wrap my head around, but I feel better now in a lot of ways. I feel like all of these pieces of this ridiculously difficult puzzle have suddenly started to come together in a way that makes sense, and can help me move forward with renewed perspective. And in some ways, it helps me to find closure and let go of some of the past and move forward as who I am now. Look towards who I want to be. I feel ok. For the first time in a really long time.

HEY guess what!

over there

I put "female" in quotes because boys can have boobs + vaginas also! And a ^{girl} ~~boy~~ can also have a penis!

This is another thing that no one told me, but I wish I had known earlier!

That's What!

TRIGGER WARNING: body image, weight, numbers, eating disorder,
body dysphoria

~*~*~*~*~*~*~*~*~*

For many years, I've been doing blind weights at the doctor's office. If there's one thing I learned and really held on to during inpatient treatment back in the day, it's that I really can't play the numbers game. Especially as it pertains to weight. As soon as I see that number on the scale, that's it. That's all that exists for me. And all that I can focus on and all that fuels every decision I make at any given moment.

I had a physical today for medical clearance to drive at my place of employment. I routinely stepped on the scale backwards. It beeped. I

stepped off and looked towards the ground. Next, they checked my height by having me stand on the scale again. I glanced at the measurement on the ruler, curious as to how tall I actually am (I can never remember if it's 5'4" or 5'5").

Fuck. *There it is. I didn't mean to. But I can't take it back. I know the number. I don't want to know the number. But I can't stop thinking about it. I'm supposed to eat lunch. But I can't stop thinking about the number.*



I want to stop. Take a minute to examine the impulsive thoughts and feelings that have suddenly and impulsively filled up every nook and cranny of my brain. Either examine them or just slow down enough to keep them from spilling out all over the place and being catalysts for unhealthy behaviors.

I guess I've been doing this long enough to be able to (usually) recognize when my thought patterns are unhealthy and when the unhealthy thought

patterns are going to become problematic for me. But it's still really hard to prevent relapse or to keep myself from spiraling downward really quickly if I'm not quick and smart about it. So I'm sitting here typing. If anything - to delay the awful thoughts and potential accompanying behaviors.

I want to remember that my body is changing. Always. Bodies are always in flux.

I want to remember that I am doing what I need to do to recover. That I am feeding my body after depriving and abusing it for years and years.

I want to remember that health is not determined by weight. That health isn't just numbers. It's how I feel and how I live. It's mind, body, and spirit.

I want to remember that that number isn't on my forehead. That people won't love me more or less because of it. And those who would are probably not worth my time.

I want to remember that my body is a vessel. Through which I am experiencing life the way that I want to. And that lets me do amazing things like ride my bike to work in all kinds of weather, and help get my derby team to world championships, and play music, and sing, and write important things, and hug people that I love. I have legs that I can use and arms that I can use and a brain that makes me who I am.

My body is resistance.

That's why that number doesn't matter. At all.

I don't want to only love the XXX pounds of me that is acceptable and completely despise the XX pounds of me that, for so long, I've believed are unworthy of love. I want to unlearn my own internalized ideas of what beauty is and "should" be. And stop letting myself apply those ideas of beauty to everyone but myself. I want to love and appreciate, or at least just accept all XXX pounds of myself, for better or worse.

I want to remember that that number doesn't have anything to do with who I am or who I want to be.

What are some things you
LOVE about yrself??

♥ Thanks 4 reading, pal!

"In real love, there should always be room for criticism" – bell hooks

♡ MACK
ATTACK oct.
2013